

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 6 of page 2 with the following amended paragraph:

A possible way to create, post and retrieve audio data is known from United States Patent Application No. US 2002/0056351. According to this known method, it is possible to post audio files to a centrally located server, and to associate audio files with documents. However, this known method does not include text-to-speech facilities. Consequently, a user still needs a device, such as a personal computer that includes specific hardware and supporting software to create audio data such as a microphone and an audio card. As a consequence, a user should have the appropriate knowledge for using, installing, and configuring this type of hardware. Also, for purposes where it is more appropriate to convert text data, such as an electronic text document, into audio data, the known method is not efficacious. This can be the case if a user is a disabled person not able to speak or use his or her voice in a proper way. This can also be the case if a user is in a public place while using an access device in order to send audio data to another user. In the latter case, a user may prefer to convert a text message into audio data using a text-to-speech application instead of recording his own voice. Another drawback of the method known from United States Patent Application No. US 2002/0056351 is that it does not comprise the retrieving of streaming audio data by a user.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 25 of page 3 with the following amended paragraph:

The method according to the invention can further include the step to associate the second type of data with a file or any other type of electronic document including, but not limited to, text documents, images and HTML documents. If the second type of data is audio data, it can be associated with a HTML document to ~~help to interpreted~~ assist in interpreting what can be seen on the HTML document. If the second type of data is video data, it can be associated with a text document to visualize what can be found in the text document. A file can be selected by a user from a collection of files centrally available at a server connected to the network, or from a collection of files locally available at the access device of the user.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 34 of page 3 with the following amended paragraph:

With the functionality of the service platform ~~(5)~~, users are able to create and distribute a certain type of data without having ~~available the required facilities for this locally~~ the required facilities locally available.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 5 of page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG. 1 is a block diagram illustrating the components involved if the first type of data is text data ~~(10)~~ and the second type of data is audio data ~~(15)~~.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 11 of page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

For the purpose of teaching of the invention, preferred embodiments of the method and devices of the invention are described in the sequel. It will be apparent to the person skilled in the art that other alternative and equivalent embodiments of the invention can be conceived and reduced to practice without departing ~~form~~from the true spirit of the invention, the scope of the invention being limited only by the appended claims as finally granted.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 17 of page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

FIG._1 shows an embodiment of the invention in the case of converting text data (10) into audio data (15). Referring to FIG. 1 there is a network (3) that connects network-users. The network (3) can be a fixed or mobile network. The network (3) may be a public network, such as the Internet, or a private network. The network may be a non-secure network or a network that is perceived as being non-secure, although secure networks are not excluded in relation to this invention. The network (3) can be facilitated by a service provider, such as an Internet service provider, although network (3) also can be facilitated by an organization ~~operating that provides~~that provides accessibility to remote sites for specific groups of customers. In the latter case, a~~the~~ customer is able to access directly, i.e. without using the Internet, one or more remote locations.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 27 of page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

A server (4) is connected to the network (3). There may be many different servers (4), geographically or functionally separated from each other and each managed, controlled and exploited by different parties. The server (4) in the embodiment depicted in FIG._1 is a microprocessor-based system comprising a processing unit and a memory although many other features, facilities and components may be part of the server (4) too. In the memory of the server (4) are one or more application programs stored that execute on the CPU of the server (4). The server (4) can be a system operating under UNIX, NT or any other related operating system. An application residing at the server (4) may be a computer program such as a WWW server, although the present invention does not exclude applications that are not related to Internet technology. As an alternative for being accessible via the Internet, the server (4) can be part of a private domain accessible for a closed user group. In the latter case, the server (4) may be hosting IP based or non-IP based applications and information. The server (4) and the applications residing on it may be operated and exploited by an electronic merchant. The server (4) and the service platform (5) may be located at the same physical location.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 1 of page 5 with the following amended paragraph:

An originating network-user (17) is connected to the network (3). The originating network user (17) is a user

that initiates the process of sending streaming audio data to a receiving network-user (18). The originating network-user (17) uses an originating access device (1) for accessing the network (3). The originating access device (1) is a device for accessing a mobile or fixed network, such as a telephone, a laptop or a personal computer. If the originating access device (1) is a telephone, it preferably is a touch-tone telephone that is able to send and receive short messages (SM's). An IP telephone may be used in connection to the present invention too. Wireless devices are also taken into account with regard to this invention, such as ~~bluetooth~~-BLUETOOTH supporting devices (BLUETOOTH is a registered certification mark of Bluetooth, SIG, Inc., a Delaware Corporation). The originating access device (1) may also be part of a local area network. Peripheral devices like a modem and a mouse are not shown. The originating access device (1) has limited or in some cases no facilities available for retrieving, playing, recording and sending audio data. Additionally, the originating network-user (17) could have a limited understanding of using or installing multi-media applications and hardware on the originating access device (1). So even if the appropriate multi-media applications and hardware are available on the originating access device (1), the originating network-user (17) may not be able to retrieve, record, send or play audio data, because the originating network-user (17) is not familiar with the usage of these multi-media applications and hardware. The physical connection between the originating access device (1) and the network (3) can be through a modem and a telephone line, a networking device and a leased line, or any types of wireless connection means. The details of the type of connection between the originating access device (1)

and the network (3) are of no consequence in the present invention.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 24 of page 5 with the following amended paragraph:

Again with reference to ~~Fig.~~ FIG. 1 the dashed line relates to the service platform (5). The service platform (5) can be operated and exploited by a service provider. The service platform consists of a number of entities, which are discussed hereafter. The entity where the conversion takes place of the text data (10) into audio data (15) is a TTS (text-to-speech) manager (6), which is a CGI (Common Gateway Interface) program. The TTS manager (6) has access to a storage means (7). A media encoder (8) is connected to the TTS manager (6). The media encoder (8) is an application that generates one or more audio data streams simultaneously based on the input that is received from the TTS server (9). The TTS server (9) comprises software that converts text into audio data (15). The TTS manager (6), the media encoder (8) and the TTS server (9) may be hosted by one physical system or may be each be hosted by a separate physical system. Usually but not necessarily, the service platform (5) is protected against threats originating from the network (3) by means of a fire-wall (not shown).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 37 of page 5 through line 10 of page 6 with the following amended paragraph:

Referring to ~~Fig.~~ FIG. 1 the originating network-user (17) accesses the server (4) via the network (3). If the

application on the server (4) is a website, the originating network-user (17) can invoke the TTS service through a HTML hyperlink. Access to the functionality of the TTS platform (5) is provided via a payment mechanism. The payment mechanism can be based upon the usage of a credit card or it can be any other payment mechanism, for instance based on dialing ~~a~~an 0800 telephone number. The originating network-user (17) can construct ~~a~~-text data (10) and send the text data (10) to the server (4). Creating the text data (10) can be done in many different ways. The text data (10) can be created by the originating network-user (17) by using a text editor, an e-mail program, a browser program or, in case the originating access device (1) is a telephone, simply by entering the text data (10) via a user-interface. A destination address (19) to identify the receiving network-user (18) is sent by the originating network-user (17) together with the text data (10) to the server (4). The destination address (19) can be an e-mail address or any type of identification number. The destination address (19) can be sent simultaneously along with the text data (10), or can be sent before or after sending the text data (10).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 19 of page 6 with the following amended paragraph:

After the text data (10) is received by the server (4), the text data (10) will be sent to the TTS manager (6). In an embodiment according to this invention, there can be sent a code (11) together with the text data (10) to the TTS manager (6). This code (11) can be used to identify the server (4) that has sent the text data (10). Based on the

code (11), accounting can take place between the service provider that operates the service platform (5) and the electronic merchant that operates the server (4).

Please replace the paragraph beginning on line 1 of page 7 with the following amended paragraph:

At the server (4) a webpage is ~~being~~ created that contains the reference address to the TTS manager (6). The webpage also contains a media player that can be started by the receiving network-user (18). The server (4) also sends an e-mail message (14) containing another reference address to the receiving network-user (18). The other reference address refers to the webpage being created by the server (4). After receiving the e-mail message (14), the receiving network-user (18) can access the webpage by selecting the reference address (or clicking the URL) received in the e-mail message (14). Having accessed the webpage, the receiving network-user (18) can start the media player resulting in sending the activation code (12) to the TTS manager (6) and consequently activating the TTS manager (6).